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unless stooped by age. Hands seldom gloved in winter are rough and dirty and calloused. I often thought that one of the strangest things about death was the way it quieted the hands of these simple folk, who, although reserved in demeanor, constantly gestured when they spoke.

I grew accustomed to the mannerisms of the people as well as to the flavor of village life by slow degrees. At first I was attracted most by the gala occasions, or the spectacular. There was the annual Christmas *horo* (folk dance) which provided the first break in the monotony of winter. On a comfortably mild Christmas Day old women and little children, the first to arrive in the main village square, sat in twos and threes waiting for the dancing to begin. Girls in their Sunday best, with necklaces of gold coins flashing in the sunlight, passed through the square and sang as they walked. They were bareheaded, since they could not yet wear the married women's head kerchief. As they drew closer, the blotches of rouge, the tremendous earrings, belts laden with clinking silver pieces, and heavy bracelets showed that the girls considered this no ordinary holiday. They formed a line, side by side, and began the dance after persuading the gypsy musicians to strike up a tune; one by one the boys who had come out of the taverns joined the moving line: one step to the right, one step to the left, then three steps to the right, kicking high as they stepped. As the dancing progressed, many married women participated, while the married men looked on with condescending interest. The little children, dressed like miniature adults, gathered on the fringes of the crowd to imitate the dancers. Gossiping groups formed, buzzed, and then dissolved to form anew.

A commotion arose in the center of the square as two young men fought over the cane which was carried by the leader of the *horo*. The leader was supposed to pay the musicians for the dances he led, in exchange for which he could direct the dancers in a serpentine movement, always in step with the music, so that they wound in and out with a "crack-the-whip" at every major bend of the line. To the peasant, the boisterous physical activity gives an exhilaration little else can induce. In fact, some of the "young blades" at this *horo* were so carried away with animal spirits that they performed six or seven steps

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to the prescribed two or three, tiring themselves out to the plaudits of those close by.

To the old-timers, however, the modern version of the traditional dance was a sad commentary on the state of things. They thought the young people too soft. After I had been watching the *horo* for some time an old man hobbled up to me. I had seen him shaking his head and muttering to himself, so I asked him, "What do you think of it, *dedo*?" He grunted, "It's all right for the young people to have a little fun, but they aren't as strong as I used to be when I was young. I used to hoe corn, harvest wheat, and come back to dance all evening. The young people can't do that now. And I wasn't as healthy as my father used to be."

The village registrar, Bai Angel, told me why there had been a declining interest in the *hora*, especially those which used to occur around the neighborhood fountains. About seven o'clock the people used to go to the pasture to get their animals. If the animals were slow in coming, then the people danced the *horo* there in the fields. When the animals had been taken home, and after the girls had finished up their housework, they went with jugs to one of the three fountains in the village and there danced again until eleven o'clock. In 1924 more fountains were installed in the village, thus tending to break up the larger groups which gathered around the three original fountains. The girls preferred to carry water from the fountains nearest their homes, and no longer attended the evening *horo*.

Tavern life was another, less colorful way of passing the bleak winter days. In the four ill-ventilated *kruchmi* the men gathered to discuss the harvest and to argue over the news read aloud from yesterday's newspaper. Some man sought his godfather, or the godfather of a recently christened son or daughter, and invited him to have a drink of *rakiya* (plum brandy) or wine. Sometimes men who had completed a business deal drank to clinch it. Men who had been in the army together told the same tall tales of adventure over and over again, re-creating those experiences which lifted them for a while out of their limited village environment. There were seldom any fights, because the frequenters put an end to disagreements before they got

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875 were turned over to Greece and Yugoslavia, respectively, after the first World War; while Dimiter was from the section of Thrace which Bulgaria was forced to surrender. Since the teachers had such backgrounds it was no wonder that adorning one of the classrooms was a sign, "NEMA MIR DOKATO NEUILLY" or "There will be no peace as long as the Treaty of Neuilly is in force."

The director of the school was a vigorous woman with splendid preparation for her task. She told me on several occasions how disappointed she was that her teachers took so little interest in helping the peasants improve their way of life. They were supposed to spend Sunday afternoons visiting the homes of their pupils in an effort to advise parents in matters of child care and standards of hygiene. Actually, the teachers, being all too human, preferred to spend the week end in Sofia rather than reform the unenthusiastic adults.

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659 The intelligentsia were usually seen in their glory at some great occasion such as the celebration of an important holiday. The event which caused most excitement during my six years of residence in Bulgaria was the birth of Prince Simeon, heir apparent to the throne of his father, King Boris. The exercises which were held in Dragalevtsy four days after the royal birth in 1937 showed how the intellectuals worked hand in hand, since the school, the church, and the state were so closely allied.

[796] The crowd had to wait at least forty-five minutes for the priests from the monastery who were to help Father Sava with the liturgy of the *vodosvet,* or consecration of the holy water, whose sprinkling gave official religious recognition to the closing of the school year. Then the mayor began to speak the high-sounding phrases which the villagers loved to hear. He told them how significant for Bulgaria was the birth of Prince Simeon.

> June Sixteenth [he said] will be written in golden letters in the history of Bulgaria. June Sixteenth marks the day when an heir was born to the throne of Bulgaria. Our school house has no name, so I recommend that we petition for the right to call our school "Prince Simeon II." The first Simeon who reigned a thousand years ago was called Simeon the Great. I feel sure that Simeon the Second will likewise go down in history as Simeon the Great.
>
> [871] In honor of this great occasion, the Government has decreed that the marks of every student will be raised, so that no one will fail in any subject. [Hurrah!

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Hurrah!] That's right; nobody will fail. No pupil will repeat the class next year! [Hurrah! Hurrah!] All deportment marks likewise will be raised and anyone who has been expelled from school will be accepted back on probation. The government is cancelling over a billion leva in unpaid taxes and is freeing thousands of prisoners . . . . [871]

Before he finished he led the children, and such adults as would join, in further cheers for Prince Simeon, for King Boris, and for Queen Iovanna. After the school choir had sung the national anthem and the "Hymn to the King," all filed inside for the official graduation exercises. There were more patriotic songs and at least twenty declamations with such titles as "Three Days at the Battle of Shipka," "To our Teachers," "A Prayer to God," "I Like the Priest," "I am a Temperance Girl," and "Nature." Displays of the children's handwork, as well as these recitations, brought some recognition to the teachers who had worked behind the scenes. 527 659 871

The director in her remarks thanked the mayor and the priest profusely and the parents casually for the help they had rendered during the past year. When she was about to present the diplomas, such bedlam broke loose that few could hear the compliments she paid the brightest pupils, who had received as special awards from the mayor books on war and religion. The exercises concluded with the presentation of a large bouquet from the pupils to the school director, who politely accepted the flowers on behalf of all the teachers.

The intelligentsia just described had more importance than their village duties seemed to indicate. They were the channels through which the national state, the national church, and the national school system expressed themselves. No member of this select group was Dragalevtsy-born. Their high status rested not only upon the influence they wielded as representatives of powerful institutions, but also upon the fact that they were educated. Education, along with the patient accumulation of land and money, was one sound way of raising one's social position, and those who had persevered in its pursuit received due honor. As one father said to his son upon sending him to school: "If you don't study you will plow, sow, and work in the fields, and where will you get then?" 565 554 [555]

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Vitosha and snow-covered Cherni Vruh, its peak, looked raw and wild. Against this background a trio of woman, ox, and man was repeated over and over as the households fell into line. The woman came first, leading the moon-eyed oxen which drew the crude wagon with the wooden plow inside. Behind them walked the man who was to guide the plow. He carried a long staff to poke the oxen when they grew sluggish at their task. With the stately pace set by the animals, the peasants walked as gravely through the hush of early morning as though they were moving to some pagan altar rising in the dewy fields. Time slipped back for me countless centuries when I saw the first spring plowing, for small boys had hung the oxen with garlands as though these animals had been meant for sacrifice.

As the days passed, this picture had its variations. Black buffalo, with a cruel crocodile look on their faces, sometimes replaced the oxen; occasionally the woman was busy about something else and the man plowed alone. If the beasts got off the track, a flood of abusive language burst forth from the exasperated peasant. The sound of the language and the pitch of the voice were even more effective than the meaning. Not only in Dragalevtsy but all over Bulgaria, slowly and laboriously the heavy earth was broken with endless patience, for almost three-fourths of the plows had wooden shares, and oxen outnumbered horses four to one.

After the seed was in the ground the peasants left the responsibility mainly to God, but partly to the field policeman and his routine patrols. To ensure God's benevolence the village had a special day for a religious procession through the fields: the first Thursday after St. George's Day (May 6). Once the constant beating of the church bell coming from a strange direction attracted my attention to a spot about one mile east of the village. There was Father Sava, the priest, in his official regalia, accompanied by several boys carrying the church cross, the bell, a flag, and large icons. From forty to fifty villagers followed in a winding line. The procession stopped to pray for rain in several places where there had been insufficient rainfall. Later I learned that on one occasion the party had climbed almost to the top of Vitosha in order to fulfill to the letter their mission of encircling all of the fields owned by the Dragalevtsy people.

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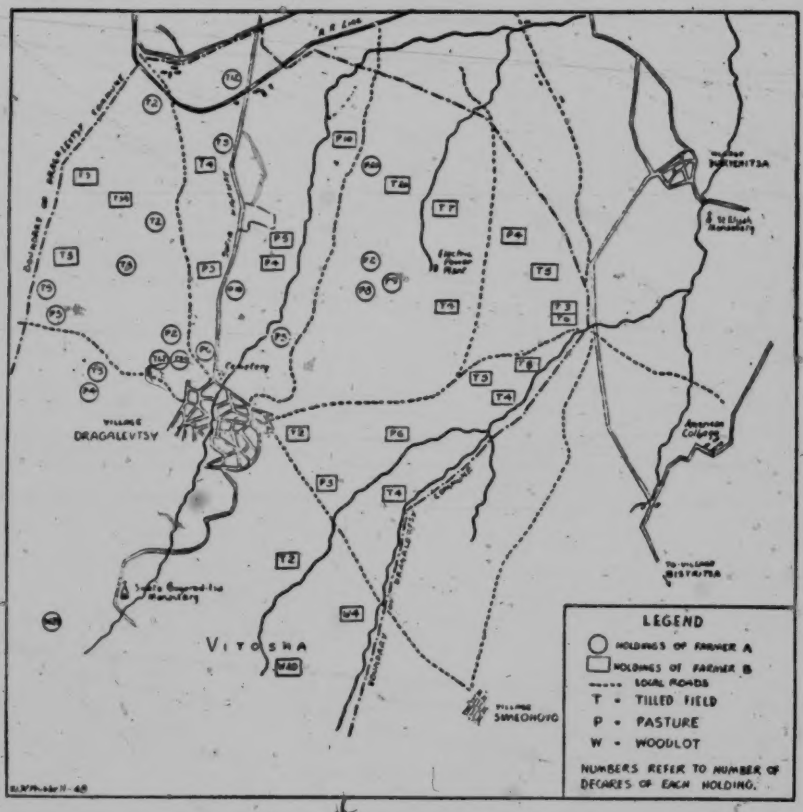

Map of holdings of two Dragalevtsy farmers

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Should drought be very severe, say in midsummer, the villagers asked for another procession and additional prayers to do more effectively what the May procession had failed to do.[1] The need for such ceremonies was explained to me one day by a tavern keeper: "While the people know in their minds that wind keeps the rain away from their fields, they believe in their hearts that the cause of drought, like that of sickness, is the sinfulness of the world today for which God is punishing the people."

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The chief bread-grain used in this region was called *smes*, a mixture of wheat and rye. It was sown by hand from a bag slung over

1 [i.e. ensure a good harvest -- Analyst]

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578 But day in and day out co-operation was much more common in the community than conflict. Conflict was more colorful, it varied the ordinary routine for participants and observers, and it brought to the surface many causes of minor irritation. The character of village life, however, called for continued interchange of labor, implements, and even work animals.

527 241 At breakfast one morning Bai Penko told me that I had better go down to the school meadows if I wanted to see something interesting. The dog days had come. The peasants would do no work of their own during three of these days because of their firmly rooted superstition that fire would later destroy whatever they did. If they should use these days for getting in their own hay, it would probably burn during the autumn. Some imaginative leader had taken advantage of this traditional idleness by proposing that every family send a member down to the school meadows to mow and stack the hay which was later to be sold for the benefit of the local school. The villagers obliged with the mental reservation that it was no concern of theirs if the school's hay burned before it could be sold to the commission merchants.

Even before I had finished my pale cocoa made of sheep's milk, some of the tavern faithful began to drift in. It was already hot outside, so hot that the men rejoiced because they did not have to go down to the meadow in the broiling sun. One patriarch had trouble persuading a daughter-in-law to represent the family, but she had agreed to go if he would buy her the pair of new shoes he had been promising her; another said his son wanted to go because he thought it would be more fun down there than hanging around the house. Such remarks as these spurred me on my way.

I had gone only a hundred yards before I caught up with a housewife headed for the meadow, a wooden pitchfork over her shoulder. She was not looking forward to the toil ahead of her, because she wanted to work in her vegetable garden, dog days or no dog days.

Even before I reached the group I saw them hard at work. Rows of men were wielding scythes, rhythmically and unhurriedly advancing together without leaving an erect blade of grass between them.

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Women, their kerchiefs loosely drawn over their heads, turned the swaths of hay that had been curing. The younger people, displaying an amazing amount of energy and enthusiasm in such sultry weather, collected the dried grass first in small piles, next in larger piles, and then several joined forces to scoot these heaps of hay across the field to the nearest stack. This scooting was the center of the day's hilarity, for it was always accompanied by shouts of triumph ("Look what a big pile we have"), and warning ("You'd better get out of our way; we're coming). The scoot usually ended in several youngsters taking a terrific tumble, but they did not seem to mind falling in the sweet-smelling new-mown hay.

The large stacks conveniently placed around the forty-acre meadow were dressed without a wasted movement by men who remained on top and were lifted higher as the stack grew in size. By the end of the afternoon some of the stacks had grown so large that the men on top had to be helped down.

A little before lunch time the priest and the mayor came strolling across the fields swinging their canes like true intelligentsia. They exchanged friendly comments with all the people they passed. They continued on across the meadow to a tavern on the Sofia road, returning eventually with two jugs of *rakiya* and a bag of fruit for those who spurned brandy.

Lunch time was quiet except when some boy played a trick on a dozing neighbor and got an angry protest in exchange. The only shade was directly next to the stacks, so most of the people had to endure the sun even while they rested. Trees were a mile away. As the afternoon wore on, the desire to get a big patch finished overcame the natural fatigue setting in. The captains, appointed by the mayor to control the activities of the people from their respective neighborhoods, stirred up the spirit of competition, and the stacks grew larger and larger. At length all the cut hay had been piled and we began to leave the field as the sun was setting behind the mountain. The towering stacks stood motionless, symbolic of that co-operation which is the heart of communal life everywhere.

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back street. I do know that the inarticulate peasant woman who sat for hours crouched on the sidewalk wondered at the strange styles of women's clothing, and that the village man, in his wandering, coveted some glittering object in a shopwindow for his child. In the late afternoon as they went home, and during the days that followed, man and wife talked about this trip to market. For them it had been a shared adventure.

Other activities which the family members shared besides the tasks of home and field and the trip to market were the holidays. The traditional holidays were religious, while the ones most recently introduced were patriotic.

January sixth was *Malka Koleda,* or Little Christmas. Many Bulgarian villagers would tell you that Christ was really born on the day before Christmas, but his birth was not made known until the following day. For that reason, great emphasis was laid upon the celebration of Little Christmas, or Christmas Eve, with the meal on Christmas Eve as the most important part of the season's festivities.

Each time I spent Christmas in a Bulgarian village home I was deeply impressed with the simplicity and beauty of its symbolism. I was a foreigner and a Protestant nonbeliever. Bai Milush and his family received me as though I were one of their own large family. Carefully and patiently they explained to me each bit of ceremony and tradition and symbolism. Often a ceremony was repeated so I could photograph it. There was not a single appurtenance of the Western Christmas in the household; even the date was different, but the Christmas spirit meant more there than anywhere else I had ever been.

To commemorate Christ's birth in a manger, straw was laid on the floor and covered with a blanket which served as the tablecloth for the evening's repast. The whole family gathered around this blanket after an incense urn had been carried as a good luck symbol from the iconostas to each room of the house and to all of the animal stalls. Because the meal was late in starting, three of the smallest children had gone to sleep, one in a crib and the other two on a wooden bed. In order to get the meal under way without further formalities, the women passed hot, fiery *rakiya* (plum brandy) to each person and stood patiently until the single glass had been emptied

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593 Although this insight into the relations between parents and their children, both adult and immature, has taken us beyond the period of childhood, it does show us why the children had to learn obedience and respect and why the village would soon show its dissatisfaction [857] with anyone who flouted the established rules. Children also learned to defer to an older brother or sister and assumed responsibility for those who were younger. In the main, a child's life was centered about the home and about those activities which he shared with members of his immediate family or the relatives in the neighborhood who were young enough to be his playmates.

● 527 574 Children became acquainted with their relatives in other villages on the annual *Subor* or "At Home Day" which each village observed. Dragalevtsy families had four village *Subori* which they could attend; on Pantaley Den (August 9) they could go to Boyana; on Spasov Den (the Monday of the eighth week after Easter) they could go to Durvenitsa; on Petkov Den (October 27) they could visit Bistritsa; and on Archangel Day (November 21) they could visit Simeonovo.

I once attended this Simeonovo *Subor* with the Dragalevtsy families. I was told gravely by the old women that on this day everyone must be especially good, for the Archangel Michael was the one who received the souls of the dead into heaven. On the day preceding, the Simeonovo women had gathered to make many loaves of bread from flour previously donated to the church by its loyal supporters. Early on the morning of the *Subor* the church sexton with some helpers killed four sheep for the big meat stews; later he gave terse commands regarding the flavoring of the stews: bean and mutton, cabbage and mutton, and rice and mutton—a somewhat monotonous menu, but one hallowed by tradition.

We started our four-mile walk at an early hour. The air was crisp and so clear that the great Balkan range, miles across the plain, stood out sharply in its rose and blue. By midmorning a large number of people, including the children, had come into the churchyard. Most of them entered the church and attended part of the service; the women carried bread and boiled corn to be blessed by the priest, who received a portion. At noon, the church service was concluded and the priest blessed the meal prepared under the auspices of the church. Then it

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was that a few hundred people—guests, villagers, and total strangers—partook of the common meal. This dinner was typical. There was wine in abundance, for, as a member of the financial committee told me, wine induced a generous spirit in the hearts of those making their annual pledges to the church. After the meal and the pledges, the crowd dispersed. Visitors went home with family groups for further eating and drinking. The village square became a kaleidoscope of colors when peasant boys and girls began to dance the stately *horo* to the music of the pipes and drums.

With the coming of evening the guests left the village. Simeonovo moved again through a period of quiet and almost unbroken monotony until Archangel Day next year. Of course Christmas and Easter brought celebrations, but not the dash and gaiety that the presence of several hundred outsiders invariably created.

In spite of these set occasions for visiting, a surprising number of Dragalevtsy people stayed put, at least as far as going to other villages was concerned. *(See Appendix V.)* They had business in Sofia, and could justify going there. But almost half of the *stopani* never went to another village, even though there were four villages within five miles of Dragalevtsy. The same held true for their wives, the *domakini.* But those that did take such trips usually let their children go along, at least on some of the visits. These proved to be gala events in the lives of the youngsters.

In addition to the commemoration of Christmas and Easter and the celebration of St. George's Day, described in the last chapter,[1] there were other holidays during the year which interested the children as much if not more than they did the adults. On the few summer holidays the villagers avoided any strenuous field work; since most of the special days came in the winter it was simple enough "to remember the holiday and take it easy." If the people found it necessary to do some important job on a holiday, they had a precedent set by no less a personage than St. Peter himself. On his own name day (July 12) he saw that the grain needed harvesting, so he took a piece of hearth cake in one hand and a sickle in the other and went to work reaping his wheat "so that the ripe grains wouldn't fall to the ground."

[1] [Cf. pp. 106-111, category 116--Analyst]

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● 527 This was the peasant version of the Sabbath being made for man, not
857 man for the Sabbath.

One holiday which children particularly enjoyed was New Year's Day, which, like Christmas, came two weeks later than our own because of the Old Style Calendar still in use by the church. Boys and girls were up at break of day to tap every passer-by with a gaily decorated branch of a cornel cherry tree. As they tapped they chanted:

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Fresh, fresh New Year
Happiness to the end.
Let mother and father be healthy
Like the past year!

Striking with a cornel-twig higher than the cap;
Wishing you a houseful of corn,
Yellow as the gold,
To ripen early, early in
The fields during the summer.

Let wedding guests again pass by
With full wine casks
To present us with white kerchiefs
And embroidered belts.

Fresh, fresh New Year,
Let us get sister married! . . .

With this chant they wished good health. In return they expected
[777] a coin or something to eat. This tapping continued until nightfall. Most members of the family looked sleepy during the day because they had stayed up late the night before to gamble. Their success or failure on New Year's Eve was supposed to foretell what luck the new year had in store.

Early in the morning the older boys and girls told fortunes by gathering around a copper kettle in which each one had placed some identifying article, such as a ring or knife. The group sang a song, connected with some occupation, while one token was drawn from the pot. If a boy's token was drawn, the occupation described would be his; if a girl's token was drawn, then she would marry a man engaged in that occupation. After this they all danced the *horo*.

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Epiphany or Bogoyavlenie on January 19 commemorated the baptism of Christ. The Dragalevtsy boys and girls knew how the day was celebrated in other villages near the rivers or the sea. There the altar cross was thrown into the icy water. Naked youths dove in and struggled violently for it. The winner, carrying the cross, then collected money from the crowd. More important even than the money was the feeling that he would be fortunate during the coming year. But Epiphany did not pass unnoticed in Dragalevtsy, even though the river was nothing more than a racing mountain brook. The priest brought the cross out to sell at auction. The buyer, of course, returned it to the priest, but with his purchase received the assurance of God's blessing in the days to come. One year, a hiker happened to be passing through on his way up to the top of Vitosha. He saw the crowd gathered around the priest, bought the cross, went to the tavern for a free drink, returned the cross to the priest, and went on his way up the mountain. Peasants marveled for some time afterwards over the dispatch he showed in the whole affair.

Formerly on this day, children were christened with cold instead of lukewarm water, and all brides of that year were bathed in the river. When I asked why such custom was no longer practiced, Bai Angel, the village registrar, shrugged: "Oh, then the people were stronger and could stand such treatment."

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On the previous day the children had all awaited the priest's arrival to sprinkle holy water in every room of the house. As we have already seen, many families collected bottles of the water that had been especially blessed for Epiphany, in the belief that it would cure various illnesses later on.

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Bulgarian boys and girls never celebrated their birthdays. Instead, they made much of their name days. Each child bore the name of some saint, with a special day on the church calendar. Each Ivan (John) celebrated on the day following Epiphany, January 20; each Grigor (Gregory) on February 7; each Iliya (Elijah) on August 2. And so it ran throughout the year. Those with names not appearing on the calendar generally chose the day of "The Forty Holy Martyrs." Whereas Americans would expect to receive gifts on their birthdays, Bulgarians, especially those who were married, expected to entertain

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●527 857 and provide food and drink for their friends on their name days. Children had to grow into the many practices surrounding holidays just as they had to grow into understanding of how to become a good farmer. It took some time to learn, for example, that on September 11, the Day of the Beheading of St. John the Baptist, one should have nothing to do with objects colored red. That color symbolized blood and guilt. On the first of March, however, red was very much in evidence. In the cities the young people exchange *martenitsi*, equivalent to our Valentines. This day was popularly called *Baba Marta* or "Old Woman March," because the weather during March was changeable and whimsical.

Although the villagers themselves paid little attention to the patriotic holidays which had been started within the past few decades, children welcomed them, for they meant a variation in the school routine. Schoolteachers would never think of letting a patriotic holiday go by without some special exercises. Among such holidays were those commemorating the liberation of Bulgaria, the King's birthday, the King's name day, the King's ascension to the throne. A special holiday for students was also becoming firmly rooted. It was the one honoring the missionary brothers, St. Cyril and St. Methodius, who were the patron saints of learning.

[574] These holidays, both religious and patriotic, were often the occasion for relatives to come to the village. The buses, mysteriously held together in places by baling wire, chugged up the hill to the square to disgorge their load of people and grotesque bundles. Children crowded around to greet the newcomers and merrily skipped beside [166] them as they walked toward the house. However, one-third of the homes had *no* visitors from outside the village during the year. Many of the visitors were originally from Dragalevtsy. A record of one year's migrants, twenty-one in all, showed that six had married outsiders and settled elsewhere; four had gone as soldiers, four as students, two as laborers, and the rest as cabmen, watchmen, and a coffeehouse proprietor.

527 857 608 All these holidays meant much to the children: exciting food, observance of age-old customs, and the arrival of guests. A few holidays were of special importance to godparents and godchildren. On

Epiphany the godparent went to the home of his godchild, poured water on him or, in a rare case, pushed him into the river for the sake of his health during the coming year. On Cheese Sunday, however, the godchild went to his godparent's home with a gift and begged forgiveness for all sins committed during the year. On certain other holidays and special occasions the godchild was also supposed to pay his respects. 608 527 857

Some features of this bond between godparent and godchild were strange to one unfamiliar with the Orthodox Church. Behavior in the presence of godparents was highly formalized and correct. A person would not lie to his godparent; nor was he supposed ever to swear in his godparent's presence. These customs emphasized the mystical spiritual union which was supposed to exist between godparent and godchild. 608

Because the office of the godparent was hereditary, the same family provided godparents for the members of another family for generations. Consequently a feeling of strong relationship had come about. A godparent was considered one of the closest of relatives. "The godfather is closer than an uncle, and the godmother is closer than an aunt," the peasants used to say. Children of the two families could not marry even though madly in love, because, in the sight of the village, they were related. The taboo against marriage into the family of the mother's godparents further complicated matters. A woman, upon marriage, adopted the godparent of her husband, who assumed the same responsibility to the children of that couple as he did to the father. If a godparent was called upon to officiate at a wedding or a christening and was unable to attend, he could send one of his children to perform in his stead. [582]

We have already seen the part that the godparents *(kumove)* played in the wedding ceremony.[1] The rite of christening revealed even more of the relationship between godparent and his spiritual ward. He went with a friend or relative to the infant's home, some two or three Sundays after its birth, and took it to the church. He had previously discussed the child's name with the parents and usually followed their wishes, but had the right to give the child any name he thought proper. In the case of the first son he was apt to follow the 608 553 851

[1] [See p 89, category 116 -- Analyst]

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[562] 178 593 were willing to grant that the changes introduced by the young people were a part of the times and might not be so bad after all. In talking to these older women I noted a touch of envy, which I would not have suspected ten years ago.

In contrast to these changes many phases of the family system remained the same. These included the attitude of intolerance towards a childless couple, the role of the mother-in-law in the caring for infants, the parents' preference for boys, the reserve between father and the children, the continued dwelling of many married sons with their fathers, and the importance attached to being an older brother or sister in the family. The godparent relationship and the attitude towards the *svatovstvo* (in-law relationships) were still of major importance.

[848] The moral standards remained relatively rigid, with continuing intolerance toward illegitimacy. The one such case within the past ten years[1] had caused a great amount of unfavorable comment. The mother resolved her predicament by leaving her child with relatives in the village and marrying in another place.

178 183 Many other traditional practices besides those related to the family still maintained their strong grip on the people. The Christmas Horo took place as always and the Sunday afternoon promenade had become more firmly established. The *babi* (older women) were called in whenever illness or childbirth occurred. The smaller families, of course, numbered fewer children these days, but the *babi* were kept just as busy since the state-employed midwife no longer worked for the Obshtina. The dead were buried much the same as formerly, although the priest forbade people to cry messages to the dead while the funeral procession paused at the crossroads on the way from the home to the church.

[527] The people still made much of the mice and wolf holidays. One day after St. Dimiter's Day (November 9) the peasants continued to fast to keep the mice from coming in and eating up not only stored food but even clothes and other prized possessions. Bai Yurdan, the tailor, told me in all seriousness, "When I was in Sofia I didn't observe such holidays but now that I am back in the village I must."

[1] [i.e. 1935 - 1945 -- Analyst]

2: Sanders E-5 (no date) 1949 EE1 Bulgaria EE1

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When I pressed him for his reasons, fully expecting him to say that he was yielding to the pressure of his wife or public opinion, he gravely replied:

"You see in Sofia I did not own any of my own cloth but now I have a great deal downstairs which I must protect from the mice." I might mention in passing that Bai Yurdan had become a faithful member of the Communist party.

The wolf holidays were still observed for three days following the Day of the Archangel Michael, which comes on November 21. During these days the peasants were careful to do no work and refused to cook or boil anything. Such rigid observances, they believed, protected their sheep from wolves, which were still numerous upon the mountain.

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One event of overshadowing importance in the changes which had occurred in Dragalevtsy since 1937 had been its incorporation in Greater Sofia in 1939. Even though their village was close to Sofia, Dragalevtsy people had always considered themselves quite apart, and looked upon Sofia ways as alien ways. However, Sofia politicians managed to bring the village under the sway of the city's municipality. Most villagers considered this an evil day in the history of their community and could cite a number of disadvantages which had occurred as a result. One of the village officials, whom I had known previously, complained particularly about the following points:

1. The city municipality had taken over the forests.

2. It had taken over the meadows which the peasants owned in common. For instance, the villagers no longer did the haying in the meadows which used to belong to the school because all of the revenue from the sale of this hay went to the Sofia School Fund. This meant that the three Dog Days,[1] described in an earlier chapter, were once more days of idleness.

[651]

3. Formerly the Dragalevtsy Obshtina collected seven or eight million leva in taxes, but since incorporation with Sofia had only a budget of one million on which to operate. My informant failed to mention that much of this money came from the factory district down on the Sofia plain which had once, much to the dissatisfaction of the

1 [Cf. p. 58, category III -- Analyst]